

REMARKS

Amendments

Claim 44 has been amended to include the step of determining the ability of the molecules to modulate the interaction of LEDGF/P75 with retroviral integrase.

Support for this amendment can be found throughout the specification, *inter alia*, in the section spanning from page 30, line 27 to page 31, line 12:

In the present invention small molecules, e.g. small organic molecules with a molecular mass <500 Da and other suitable molecules, can also function as antagonists or modulators of Inip76 in order to prevent or treat a viral infection. Small molecules and other drug candidates can readily be obtained, for example, from combinatorial and natural product libraries and using methods known to the art to screen candidate molecules for their Inip76 antagonizing or modulating function. Screening assays in this regard are known in the art, as described for example in PCT/US99/12001. Furthermore, random peptide libraries, consisting of all possible combinations of amino acids, attached to a solid phase or in solution, may also be used to identify peptides that act as antagonists of Inip76.

Suitable antagonists or modulators of the interaction of Inip76 with HIV IN can also be developed by known drug design methods, e.g. using structural analysis of the IN, Inip76 or the complex by employing methods established in the art, for example, using X-ray crystallography to analyze the structure of the complex formed (see for example Sielecki, A.R. et al. Science 1989; 243:1346-51; Dhanaraj, V. et al. Nature 1992; 357(6377):466-72) and/or by modifying known LEDGF binding molecules i.e. "lead compounds," to obtain (more potent) inhibitors and compounds for different modes of administration (i.e. oral vs. intravenous). (Emphasis added.)

Claims 49 and 50 have been amended to more clearly formulate the method steps. The method of claim 49 is moreover illustrated in Example 22. No new matter has been added.

Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 48-50 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention, by reciting incomplete method steps. Claims 44 and 48-50, as amended, address this issue, and the rejection should therefore be withdrawn.

Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 44 and 46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Shinohora et al. (US Pat. 6,750,052).

Without acquiescence to this rejection, Applicants have amended claim 44 to require determining the ability of a molecule to modulate the interaction of protein LEDGF/P75 with a retroviral integrase. Shinohora et al. does not disclose the interaction of LEDGF/P75 with retroviral integrase nor suggests determining whether compounds are capable of modulating this interaction. Shinohora et al. therefore cannot anticipate claim 44 or 46, and this rejection should therefore be withdrawn.

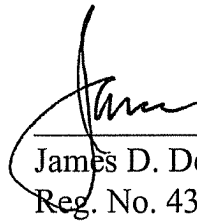
CONCLUSION

Applicant submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

If there are any charges or any credits, please apply them to Deposit Account No. 03-2095.

Respectfully submitted,

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